

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 EB-08 OMB-01
/115 W

-----007021 240800Z /15

R 232025Z FEB 78 ZFD
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5887
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 05882

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS EG ET SO US UNSC
SUBJECT: SHIPMENT OF MILITARY ITEMS TO ETHIOPIA

REF: (A) STATE 45038, (B) CAIRO 5715 (NOTAL)

1. POLCOUNS CALLED ON DIRECTOR MFA AFRICA DEPARTMENT
SIDQI FEBRUARY 23 TO INSURE THAT HE HAD RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT STATEMENT ON QUESTION OF ARMS TO ETHIOPIA.
SIDQI HAD NOT YET READ STATEMENT BUT DID SO AT THE TIME.
DESPITE POLCOUNS EMPHASIS ON FACT THAT U.S. WAS
TAKING ACTION AGAINST ETHIOPIA BY WITHHOLDING ALMOST
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SIX-SEVENTHS OF ARMS PAID FOR AND LEGALLY TURNED OVER
TO ETHIOPIA, SIDQI FOCUSSED ONLY ON NET RESULT; I.E.
THAT U.S. PERMITTING DISPATCH OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO
ETHIOPIA. SIDQI FOUND THIS "INCOMPREHENSIBLE". HE
COULD ONLY INTERPRET IT AS MEANING U.S. WAS NOT SERIOUS
ABOUT SETTLEMENT AND THAT IT WAS TAKING SIDE OF ETHIOPIA.
IF THIS WERE NOT THE CASE, HE ASKED WHAT WAS U.S.

SENDING TO SOMALIA? SIDQI PARTICULARLY OBJECTED TO THE TIMING. HE ASSUMED THAT U.S. MAY HAVE LONG-RANGE POLICY OF ATTEMPTING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS OR EVEN INFLUENCE MENGISTU. AS LONG-TERM POLICY THIS MIGHT BE ALL RIGHT BUT IMMEDIATE SHORT-TERM PROBLEM IS VERY REAL POSSIBILITY OF DECISIVE SOVIET/CUBAN MILITARY VICTORY, WHICH WOULD HAVE AFRICAN-WIDE REPERCUSSIONS.

2. SIDQI SAID GOE BELIEVES IT IS CRUCIAL TO PREVENT A "DECISIVE VICTORY" BY SOVIET-BACKED FORCES. THIS MEANS SOMALIS MUST RECEIVE MILITARY AND OTHER SUPPORT TO ENABLE THEM TO RESIST. GOE BELIEVES SOMALIS ARE CAPABLE OF MAKING A STAND AT THE KARIREH (?) PASSES AND THIS COULD BE ATTEMPTED BY BEGINNING OF RAINY SEASON IN MARCH. EGYPT IS PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE ETHIOPIAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER OGADEN AND OTHER ASPECTS OF U.S.-PROPOSED SETTLEMENT BUT IT HIS VIEW SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS TO THIS END CAN NOT TAKE PLACE UNLESS SOMALIA PUTS UP A STRONG DEFENSE AND A STALEMATE OF SORTS IS REACHED. THEREFORE, SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA IS MORE VITAL THAN EVER.

3. UNSC MEETING ON HORN. SIDQI SAID UNSC MEETING ON HORN SEEMS OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR TIME BEING, AND GIVEN EXISTING MILITARY SITUATION IN FAVOR ETHIOPIA, THIS IS JUST AS WELL. NEITHER ETHIOPIA NOR SOMALIA WISHED TO HAVE MEETING AT THIS TIME. BRITISH COUNSELOR, WHO ALSO
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CALLED ON SIDQI FEBRUARY 23, SAID HE HAD NO NEW INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT UNSC MEETING. HE ALSO TOLD POLCOUNS THAT FRENCH ARE NOT PARTICIPATING IN JOINT DEMARCHES IN CAIRO ON HORN NOR ARE CANADIANS. GERMANS HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS ONLY ABOUT OAU MEETING IN TRIPOLI, NOT POSSIBILITY OF UNSC MEETING. EILTS

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